

Session	Title & Description	Speaker	UPPCC, ISM & NIGP Approved CEH Credit	Attended ✓
Sunday, October 4, 2026				
1:00-4:00 pm Pre-Conference Session	Title : AI Bootcamp, 2026 Description: an interactive Bootcamp where you'll practice using AI tools to assist with a variety of tasks in the procurement and solicitation lifecycle. We'll cover more than a dozen use cases of what AI can do now – and how your vendors/suppliers are already using it! Learn how AI can boost your productivity and where it's headed in the future!	Roshini Aparna, Doctoral AI Research and Educator in the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering at Arizona State University	3.0	
Monday, October 5, 2026				
8:00 - 9:00 am Keynote	Opening Keynote Address: The Strategic No: Strengthening Procurement Leadership Through Clear, Confident Communication Description: In today's procurement environment, professionals are constantly balancing competing priorities, stakeholder expectations, and high-stakes decisions. The pressure to say "yes" can lead to misalignment, overextension, and reduced strategic impact. This session explores how courageous communication—especially the ability to say "no" with clarity and confidence—is a critical leadership skill in public procurement.	Tiffani Barton Bestselling Author, Procurement Strategist and Speaker	1.0	
9:00 - 10:00 am General Session	General Session: Virtually Said: Leveraging Technology without Losing the Human Touch Description: This presentation explores how procurement work has evolved from gathering around a conference table to collaborating through virtual meetings and how teams can use modern tools, including AI, to work more effectively without losing authenticity, clarity, or human judgment. It will walk participants through the communication shift, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities created by virtual collaboration. The session then introduces AI not as a replacement for professional expertise, but as a support tool that can streamline the technical, repetitive, or administrative parts of procurement.	Michele Skaggs, CPPO, NIGP- CPP, VCO, VCM Director of General Services, Virginia Department of Social Services	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 1A	Title: The Protest Spectrum: Different Designs, Same Destination Description: Protests are among the most scrutinized elements of the procurement process—and how they're handled can define public trust in an organization's fairness and integrity. In this session, these procurement leaders will explore how different agencies structure, interpret, and respond to protests within their unique operational frameworks. This session will unpack the mechanics that drive transparency, mitigate risk, and ensure defensible outcomes. Participants will walk away with practical insights and real-world examples illustrating that while no two agencies handle protests the same way, each can arrive at a process that is both fair and resilient.	Carrie Mathes, MPA, CFCM, NIGP- CPP, CPPO, C.P.M., CPPB, A.P.P., Manager, Orange County Procurement Division and Charles Spencer, NIGP-CPP, NIGP-PPA, FCCM, FCCN, Procurement Director, City of Plantation	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 1B	Title: Turn Friction to Function on Procurement Collaboration Description: What if some of your biggest procurement challenges such as delays, misalignment, and stakeholder friction aren't process problems at all, but people problems you can actually fix? In today's environment, procurement professionals are expected to lead, influence, and collaborate across departments and with suppliers, often without formal training in how to make those partnerships succeed. The result? Miscommunication, stalled projects, and missed opportunities. This session cuts through the noise and gives you a practical, people-first framework you can use immediately. Using Patrick Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions of a Team model, we'll break down the real reasons collaboration breakdowns in procurement.	Faith Harper, MA, CTCD, CTCM, Manager at Sourcwell and Sherri Barnhardt, Manager at Sourcwell	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 1C	Title: Short vs. Long Term - The False Choice Description: As Procurement becomes evermore of a strategic asset to the functions of all levels of government, it is vital that professionals learn to lead effectively. Often it feels as if short term goals are in conflict with long term ones as we are constantly bombarded with requests to "get it done now" with no clear vision. This session will assist Procurement leaders on how to embrace both the short and long term while delivering above-average results for their agencies.	Spencer Lord, CPPO, CPPB, NIGP-CPP, Asst. Chief Procurement Officer-Quality Assurance & Compliance, Georgia Dept. of Transportation	1.0	

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2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 2A	Title: The Request for Proposals (RFP) Process Description: The Request for Proposal method of procurement is perhaps the most complex and exciting procurement method statutorily defined and allowed for the purchase of goods and/or services in the State of Texas. This class will define what the RFP/CSP method is, how it differs from Invitation for Bids, and covers the steps in the RFP process; scope development, solicitation development, advertising, addenda, qualification and evaluation of responses, oral presentation/interviews, negotiation, award, and debriefs.	Richard Ehler, CTCD, CTCM, Technical Advisor to the Procurement and Contracting Services Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission	1.25	
2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 2B	Title: Advanced Project Management for Continuous Excellence in Public Procurement Description: Public procurement professionals are often responsible for leading complex solicitations and cross-functional initiatives under tight timelines and high expectations. Yet sustaining consistent, high-quality performance over time requires more than basic project management; it demands a disciplined, continuous pursuit of excellence. This highly interactive workshop is designed to help procurement teams build the advanced project management capabilities that enable them to go beyond managing day-to-day workloads to create the space and consistency for continuous improvement initiatives	Pamela Portocarrero, Project Leader, Partners for Public Good	1.25	
2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 2C	Title: From Contracts to Clout: How Organizational Savvy Drives Procurement Success Description: Procurement is no longer just about negotiating contracts and managing suppliers. It's about influence, strategy and organizational alignment. From Contract to Clout: How Organizational Savvy Drives Procurement Success explores the critical role of professional acumen and navigation in elevating procurement from a transactional function to a strategic organizational powerhouse. This session will examine how understanding organizational dynamics, building relations, and leveraging influence can unlock value, mitigate risk, and position procurement as a trusted partner withing an organization.	Maria Roux, CPPB, GCPM, Chief Procurement Officer – Georgia Dept. of Transportation	1.25	
4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 3A	Title: AI-Powered Procurement: The Future Didn't Wait Description: In this talk, the speakers will navigate a live RFP walkthrough, from drafting specifications to evaluating bids, with AI-driven insights. You'll learn how you can streamline procurement by leveraging AI for sourcing, contract management, and supplier evaluation while ensuring compliance, enhancing decision-making, and upholding transparency. At the conclusion of this talk, you will be ready to apply best practices in prompt engineering and IT compliance for ethical, efficient procurement.	Kenneth Howe, Chief Technology Officer at PlanetBids and Alex Tanck, Director of Product Management at PlanetBids	1.0	
4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 3B	Title: From Mastering Audit Preparedness in Public Procurement Description: This presentation provides a comprehensive guide and real world lessons learned to audit readiness in public procurement, focusing on Federal (2 CFR Part 200), State (Texas Education Code & Government Code), and Local (board policy) requirements.	Edna Johnson, Ed. D., CTCM, RTSBA, Director of Procurement Services, Harris County Department of Education	1.0	

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4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 3C	Title: Data Driven Leadership in Public Procurement Description: Many governments aim to improve procurement outcomes whether by increasing efficiency, expanding vendor participation, boosting competition, or strengthening compliance, but often struggle to translate these goals into performance metrics that can be measured regularly. This session explores how procurement teams can use data as a strategic leadership tool to diagnose challenges, drive decision-making, and improve outcomes across the procurement lifecycle.	Matt Lee, Project Leader of Research at Partners for Public Good	1.0	
Tuesday, October 6, 2026				
8:00 - 9:00 am General Session	Title: Purposeful Leadership Means Evidencing Excellence Description: Procurement is being reshaped by AI, cloud systems, blockchain, and virtual collaboration, but the profession still operates under enduring legal and policy constraints. This session uses stare decisis as a framing device to show how procurement leaders can embrace innovation without abandoning precedent, governance, or public accountability. Participants will explore the promise and limits of agentic and generative AI, the continuing importance of human judgment, and the dangers of “garbage in, garbage out” when data, instructions, or oversight are weak.	Dietrich von Biedenfeld, CPPO, Executive Director of Procurement Operations, Houston City College	1.0	
9:15 - 10:30 am General Session	Title: Integrity in Action: Practical Trust Building for Public Procurement Description: Public procurement professionals earn credibility not through intent, but through consistent, observable behaviors that demonstrate integrity and build trust. In this session, participants will focus on what trust and integrity look like in procurement and why it matters. Participants will also explore trust as a set of practical behaviors that strengthens credibility with suppliers and internal partners. The session will take you through the most common trust breakers that erode confidence in process and provide practical techniques to help mitigate them.	Jeremy Schwartz, CSSBB, CPPO, NIGP-CPP, Chief Operating and Procurement Officer at Sourcewell	1.25	
10:45 - 11:45 am Breakout Session 4A	Title: Stare Decisis Meets Disruption: Context is Key Description: Procurement is being reshaped by AI, cloud systems, blockchain, and virtual collaboration, but the profession still operates under enduring legal and policy constraints. This session uses stare decisis as a framing device to show how procurement leaders can embrace innovation without abandoning precedent, governance, or public accountability. Participants will explore the promise and limits of agentic and generative AI, the continuing importance of human judgment, and the dangers of “garbage in, garbage out” when data, instructions, or oversight are weak	Dietrich von Biedenfeld, CPPO, Executive Director of Procurement Operations, Houston City College	1.0	
10:45 - 11:45 am Breakout Session 4B	Title: Grow Up: Maturity, Accountability, and People Management that work Description: Grow Up: Maturity, Accountability, and People Management that work explores the thought that organizations do not stall because of weak policies or insufficient expertise they stall because leadership fails to mature at the same pace as responsibility. This session intends to challenge outdated beliefs that strong Buyers will automatically make strong leaders and looks at the gaps that hold procurement teams back (inconsistent accountability, underdeveloped people management skills, lack of generational understanding, leadership habits rooted in control rather than trust as well as misguided belief that everyone should work the same. This session explores what leadership maturity truly looks like in modern procurement environments.	Maria Roux, CPPB, GCPM, Chief Procurement Officer – Georgia Dept. of Transportation	1.0	

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10:45 - 11:45 am Breakout Session 4C	Title: The Hidden Cost of Supplier Friction: How Process and Mindset Shape Procurement Outcomes Description: Public procurement leaders are under pressure to drive competition, innovation, and value, yet many organizations are creating barriers that limit all three. Processes, technology, and long-standing norms can create friction that affects how suppliers decide whether to participate. This session shares a supplier-informed perspective on why qualified suppliers choose not to pursue opportunities and how tools like AI are making those decisions faster and more selective. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to reduce unnecessary friction, improve supplier engagement, and support stronger competition and participation.	Kim Cullen, Director of Marketing at Beacon Bid	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 5A	Title: Measuring What Matters: Evaluating the Impact of Procurement Performance Improvements Description: Public procurement teams are increasingly investing in process improvements, from streamlining solicitations to expanding vendor participation, but often struggle to clearly measure whether those changes are delivering meaningful results. Without a structured approach to evaluating a new innovative approach, it can be difficult to demonstrate impact, refine strategies, or sustain progress over time. This session focuses on how procurement leaders can evaluate the impact of performance improvement efforts using data, metrics, and practical evaluation frameworks.	Amanda Jasso, Associate on the Procurement Excellence Network team at Partners for Public Good	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 5B	Title: Lessons from Landman: Excellence in Procurement from the Patch Description: The hit show, Landman, includes many lessons in leading procurement excellence if you drill beneath the surface. Short educational clips from seasons 1 and 2 will fuel a lively and interactive session - with a bit of humor added to the mix.	Brandon Harper, Managing Director of Procurement, Texas Tech University and Chris Robinson, Director of Procurement, University of Connecticut (Uconn)	1.0	
1:15 - 2:15 pm Breakout Session 5C	Title: Pursuing Ethical Procurement Description: Public eyes see all. Not only are you expected to find the best value with public funds, but you are also responsible for being compliant and transparent. Most procurement professionals violate ethical standards accidentally or unknowingly, which is never an acceptable reason. In this presentation, you'll find out where that ethical line should be drawn in your office so you and your staff can stay on the good side.	Dan Marran, CPPO, C.P.M., NIGP-CPP, Director of Government Accounts for Sourcewell	1.0	
2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 6A	Title: Excellence is Not a Choice: Moving Procurement Forward Description: Procurement Professionals are constantly required to do more with less. Excellence in our positions is no longer a goal, it is a requirement. This session will discuss how Procurement Professionals can create a culture of excellence using the NPI Award Criteria as well as continuous improvement processes. There will also be opportunities to discuss "wins" in the field and related topics.	Spencer Lord, CPPO, CPPB, NIGP-CPP, Asst. Chief Procurement Officer-Quality Assurance & Compliance, Georgia Dept. of Transportation	1.25	
2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 6B	Title: Resiliency in Procurement Leadership: Feedback, Reframe, Response Description: Life changes daily, and your professional position is no exception. We've all been there - leadership changes, and suddenly you're getting negative feedback when previously you thought everyone loved you. Maybe your department was part of a re-organization, and suddenly the measures of success are either undefined, or a constantly moving goalpost. You applied for that promotion and got it, but the position came with baggage you didn't see coming. How you manage your emotions and respond in stressful situations will have lasting impacts on your career. This team of presenters will share lessons learned in real life experiences. With each setback, you can choose growth over defeat. Learn how to use some of the tools that will help you build resiliency through the growing pains.	Tara Action, NIGP-CPP, CPPB, Director of Procurement and Central Services, Mohave County, and Jenn Myers, MPA, CPPO, NIGP-CPP, CPPB, Purchasing Director, City of Scottsdale and Katherine Tople, NIGP-CPP, CPPB, Chief Procurement Officer, Illinois Secretary of State	1.25	

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2:30 - 3:45 pm Breakout Session 6C	Title: AI in Public Procurement Description: Procurement Professionals are constantly required to do more with less. Excellence in our positions is no longer a goal; it is a requirement. This session will discuss how Procurement Professionals can create a culture of excellence using the NPI Award Criteria as well as continuous improvement processes. There will also be opportunities to discuss "wins" in the field and related topics.	Bobby Williams, Solutions Engineer, OpenGov	1.25	
4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 7A	Title: What We Learned from a GFOA Award of Excellence: Practical Procurement Innovations You Can Use Today Description: The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District earned its first-ever GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) Award of Excellence last year for a procurement-driven initiative. This session takes you behind the scenes of our submission, focusing on how strategic procurement practices, rooted in cross-department collaboration, education, process redesign, and data transparency, can strengthen compliance, improve operational efficiency, and elevate procurement's role in agencywide decision-making.	Sarah Araya, Procurement Program Manager, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	1.0	
4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 7B	Title: Emotional Intelligence: The Leadership Advantage Description: This session equips leaders with a practical, actionable understanding of Emotional Intelligence and its impact on communication, decision-making, and team performance. Drawing on the five core components of EI - self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills - participants will explore how emotionally intelligent leadership strengthens culture, reduces miscommunication, and builds trust. Through real-world applications such as navigating difficult conversations, fostering psychological safety, and modeling EI-driven behaviors, attendees will gain strategies to enhance their leadership effectiveness and create environments where people feel respected, supported, and empowered.	Ryan Quigley, CPPB, NIGP-CPP, MPA, Purchasing Agent, City of Celina	1.0	
4:00 - 5:00 pm Breakout Session 7C	Title: Battling Perceptions: Providing Great Customer Service in Purchasing Description: The Purchasing Department is often seen as the enemy to progress and efficiency in any organization. Within government, the perception is negative for both the customers of the department and the general public. This discussion will offer simple solutions for battling the perception of "Purchasing is the obstacle to reaching my goals."	Dan Marran, CPPO, C.P.M., NIGP-CPP, Director of Government Accounts for Sourcewell	1.0	
Wednesday, October 7, 2026				
8:00 - 9:00 am General Session	Title: AI in Procurement: From Curiosity to Confident Use Description: As suppliers increasingly rely on AI tools to generate proposal content, today's evaluators need practical guardrails to safeguard decision-making and save time. AI is already embedded in supplier proposals — often in ways that are easy to miss, but still capable of distorting scoring, reviewer perception, and overall evaluation fairness. This panel session offers lessons learned from Sourcewell's retrospective on a recent evaluation process, where evaluators determined that AI was used in creating portions of the proposal narratives submitted. Participants will leave with actionable guidance and a clear understanding of the top risk factors of AI-influenced proposals, tailored to the NPI members unique transparency, modernization, and public-trust standards.	Jeremy Schwartz, CSSBB, CPPO, NIGP-CPP, Chief Operating and Procurement Officer at Sourcewell and Danny Mays, NIGP-CPP, CPPO, CPPB, CPSM, CPSD, Assistant State Court Administrator of Operations and Chief Procurement Officer, Maryland Judiciary and Lisa Truax, NIGP-CPP, CPPO, Senior Procurement Analyst at Sourcewell	1.0	

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9:15 - 10:30 am General Session	Title: Continued Pursuit of Excellence AEP Criteria 18 (cyber security and procurement) Description: This session focuses on how procurement can play a critical role in strengthening organizational cybersecurity and managing vendor-related risks. Using the Water Authority's 2025 initiative as a case study, the session highlights practical tools and process improvements that embed cybersecurity controls directly into the procurement lifecycle.	Candida Kelcourse, Purchasing Officer, Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority	1.25	
10:45 - 11:45 am General Session	Title: Developing Leaders in Public Procurement Description: This session is designed to be a panel discussion with audience participation to catalogue steps we can all take to ensure procurement leaders of today are focused on developing our leaders of tomorrow. We know that most people do not want to speak in public, and that our profession is filled with some of the hardest working and most underappreciated public servants in government. Given those facts, our talent development framework should recognize that we need both heads down practitioners doing the excellent work we are known for, and vocal advocates for this profession. New ideas are emerging to bring credit and recognition to procurement as a critical linchpin in government operations. We will focus on tomorrow's leadership and advocacy, as well as how we get there from here, taking advantage of the new age of procurement that is emerging in some of our most forward-thinking governments.	David Gragan, CPPO, Interim Chief Procurement Officer, City of Palm Bay	1.0	
Total Requested CEH			Maximum=18 CEH	

Attendee Signature

Date

Attendee Name